Review of **National** Intelligence

February 1975

Published Several Times a Year by the Intelligence Community Staff for the Director of Central Intelligence

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A Statement from the Director of Central Intelligence

I welcome this first issue of the IC Staff's Review of National Intelligence because I see in this new enterprise an opportunity to further the community's efforts to improve the quality of finished national intelligence. I look upon this to a degree as a companion of our Studies in Intelligence publication, which also deals, in its own way, with matters affecting and attending the development of intelligence as a profession.

The reviews and critical appreciations which appear here should permit us to identify the strengths and weaknesses of both our coverage of current events and our estimates of longer term developments; the special articles and studies should help us to assess a variety of intelligence matters in a broad community perspective; and the statistical surveys should help us to examine the substantive focus of our efforts, their relationship to the KIQs, trends in production, etc. These at any rate are the hopes of the publisher and, indeed, represent my own expectations as well.

W. E. Colby

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Product Review Division (PRD) of the Intelligence Community Staff regularly reviews a wide variety of intelligence products (the NID, NIB, DIN, Sigint Summary, Interagency Memoranda, DIEs, NIEs, etc.) and evaluates substantive coverage in all of the major categories of intelligence production—current, estimative, and basic.

PRD's findings have hitherto been presented only in special surveys (e.g., post-mortem reports) and in informal reports to individual addressees. This new publication, The Review of National Intelligence, brings the work of product review to bear on a broader set of interests and concerns and presents PRD's findings to a larger, community-wide audience. Our fundamental purposes in this enterprise are wholly constructive: to develop a series of extensive—and unique—files concerning various aspects of intelligence and intelligence processes; and to provide the kind of critical appreciation of published intelligence which will be of value to the DCI, to USIB, and to the actual producers of intelligence. Our emphasis in this first issue is on the review of current publications, but we plan in future issues to provide full coverage of a diverse array of finished intelligence issuances.

Your comments concerning this publication, its contents, or, indeed, on any matter of interest to the production community, will be most welcome. Please address them (with permission to re-print them in this journal, if appropriate) to the Chief, Product Review Division, ICS, Room 6 E 04, Headquarters Building.

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Samuel V. Wilson
Lieutenant General, USA
Deputy to the DCI for the
Intelligence Community

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SAMPLE ISSUE No Dissemination

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REVIEW OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

December 1974

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Sample Issue

National Review of Intelligence - December 1974

I. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REVIEW

Our review this month focuses on three current intelligence publications: the National Intelligence Daily (NID), published by CIA and coordinated within the Community; the National Intelligence Bulletin (NIB), produced by the DCI with the participation of US:B components; and the Defense Intelligence Notice (DIN) series, is sued by DIA. We have sought to evaluate the adequacy of substantive coverage of major world geographical regions and certain significant topical areas; to compile statistics concerning particular aspects of coverage, such as the relationship of published articles to Key intelligence Questions; to identify problems of emphasis and presentation; and, where appropriate, to propose remedies for some of these problems.

Principal Findings

Coverage: There was no discernible dearth of current intelligence coverage during the review period. On the contrary, if the national consumer had a problem with these publications. It was more likely the consequence of community overkill: too numy publications, too many articles, and too many items of marginal interest.

Publications: But important distinctions can be made between the three current publications. The National Intelligence Daily, which is designed to reach the highest levels of readersh of was adjudged the clearly superior publication by all our reviewers. Though a fairly substantial proportion of its contents was thought to be of small or questionable value to a national audience, the DID contained by far the greatest number of articles counted as especially significant and/or as particularly well-presented. And the NID, in our view, has many other virtues: its overall style, flexibility, timeliness, high classification, emphasis on analysis, eminent readability, etc. The greatest number of problems—most notally those concerning the presumed value and quality of coverage—were found in the DIN, a circumstance no doubt explained in part by its youth and by its effort to serve the widely differing interests of a diverse readership.

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Greece, Turkey, Cyprus: No textual commentery for this period; see Chart for statistical breakdown.

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Economics: No textual commentary for this period; see Chart for statistical breakdown.



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II. SPECIFIC COMMENTARIES (cont'd)

B. Assessments

Reviews of other (non-current) kinds of intelligence, such as NIEs, Interagency Memoranda, other major substantive memoranda, etc. will be conducted and published here on a selective basis. None has been done for this experimental issue.

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IV. SPECIAL STUDIES

The Principal Findings of a study prepared by ICS and presented to USIB in December are reproduced below:

Subject: A Survey of Intelligence Community Periodicals

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

- 1. The Intelligence Community in Washington issues a surprising number of intelligence journals: it publishes some 130 hard-copy intelligence periodicals at least twice a year which are disseminated outside the agencies of origin. In addition, it publishes on the order of 73 periodicals which are disseminated only electronically and some 241 which are published regularly but not more than once annually.
- 2. A review of the titles and dissemination of these journals does not reveal any obvious significant duplication or gaps in coverage. But this should be viewed as a highly tentative finding since we have not been able to examine the contents of all these publications and have not sought to elecit comments from recipients.
- 3. In any event, given the magnitude of the inventory, and given growing resource constraints, it seems safe to say that the Community produces too many periodicals.
- 4. We do not propose any specific actions in response to these findings, but we do urge each agency-especially, of course, those producing the most titles--to review the rationale for its own production program and-equally important--to examine its requirements for publications produced elsewhere. We also suggest that consideration be given to the elimination or merger of some publications; the reduction of the frequency of issuance of others; and the paring down of dissemination lists for all.

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V. RESPONSES FROM READERS

Letters of interest from readers of the Review

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VI. OUTSIDE LOOKING IN--THE CONSUMER'S VIEW

"Significant improvement in the intelligence product is...needed. The NSCIC will afford improved guidance regarding consumer needs."

Presidential Directive of 5 November 1971

- 1. The 20 November 1974 meeting of the NSCIC Working Group, under the chairmanship of the D/DCI/IC, General Wilson, engaged in a wide-ranging discussion and critique of the Intelligence Community's responsiveness to consumer needs. The comments of the State, Defense, Treasury, JCS, and NSC representatives focused primarily on the need to provide the consumer with more effective means of guiding the Intelligence Community's production program. A subsidiary concern was the need of consumers for more information about the structure and capabilities of the Intelligence Community.
- 2. In general terms, the representatives felt that the Community could be "more invitational" in seeking guidance from consumers. Ore member noted that some consumers believe the Intelligence Community looks on them as irritants; he thought there was a need for the Community to adopt the attitude that the consumer was usually right. In more specific terms, they proposed that the KIQs should be prepared by consumers under the aegis of the NSCIC Working Group and that consumers should play a more substantive role in the production of NIEs, including participation in the drafting of terms of reference and review of NIEs in draft prior to publication. They suggested that consumers should evaluate and conduct post-mortems of NIEs and should critique any intelligence products of special interest to them. They also believed that consumers should have a voice in determining the kinds of periodicals being produced (e.g., the NIB and NID) and changes in such periodicals. It was noted, for example, that some consumers criticized the production of three current intelligence dailies instead of one and the proliferation of situation reports during crises.

^{*}This section will summarize the views of consumers as expressed in meetings of the NSCIC Working Group (as above); in comments by individual consumers to senior intelligence officers (e.g., NIOs); in letters from consumers to ICS or other elements of the Community or in any other form or forum.

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- 3. On the question of the information gap, one of the representatives made the point that consumers often have difficulty finding out who to ask to respond to their intelligence needs. He proposed that the Intelligence Community take the initiative with briefings or, preferably, the production of a handbook for consumers on the allocation of production responsibilities, the status of capabilities, etc. Another representative said he believed consumers also needed to know more about collection capabilities. He noted that consumers tend to believe that the Community can collect anything it wants and that lack of reporting may convey the impression nothing is happening when it may be that no collection capability exists. Several members complained of the lack of foreknowledge of the Community's production schedule. They urged the distribution to consumers of schedules of upcoming National Intelligence Estimates and other major studies. One member noted that he received constant complaints that a particular Estimate being worked on was not the one that was needed. The time-lag between the initiation of an Estimate and its completion was also noted as a matter of concern.
- 4. The members also made a number of specific criticisms about the intelligence product. One member said consumers wanted more evaluation in both current intelligence and estimative documents. Another sought better identification of who was making the evaluation—e.g., the Community, DIA, CIA, or perhaps the reporting embassy. Concern was expressed about "unqualified conclusions;" more explicit measuring of uncertainties in intelligence judgments was wanted. One representative felt that biographic intelligence needed improvement.